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LAMPETER
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

THE
ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1925.

BY

E. Cambria Thomas, M.D., D.P.H.

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Lampeter Rural District Council.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit to you my Annual Report on the sanitary condition of the District for the year ending December 31st, 1925. This Report is required to be a Survey Report and is supposed to deal comprehensively with

(a) The measure of progress made in the area during the preceding five years in the improvement of the public health.

(b) The extent and character of the changes during that period in the public health services of the area (e.g., Housing, Water Supply, Sewerage, &c.)

(c) Any further action of importance in the organization or development of public health services contemplated by the Local Authority, or considered desirable by the Medical Officer of Health.

Though such matters as Housing, Water Supply, &c., have often been discussed by the Council, I am afraid that no great progress can be said to have been made owing to the difficulty in getting the ratepayers to see the importance of Sanitary improvements which cost money especially as the expenditure does not produce immediate results. I believe, however, that as the shock of the war with its terrible effects upon the resources of the country, is gradually passing away that in the course of a year or two more attention will be paid to the question of public health.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres), 34,279.

Population (census, 1921), 3491, and estimated to 1925, 3515.

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTER
OF THE AREA.

Hills and vales, the soil consisting of sand, gravel and clay.

Number of Inhabited Houses (1921)—959.

Number of families or separate occupiers (1921)—920.

Rateable value, £21,094.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate, £88.

Poor Law Relief, £1,406.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The inhabitants are chiefly engaged in agricultural pursuits, entailing arduous outdoor occupation which exposes them to inclement weather resulting in Chest Troubles, Rheumatism, various forms of Neuralgias, Heart and Kidney affections, especially during the winter months.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births—total, 59 : Male, 27 ; Female, 32.

Legitimate : Male, 23 ; Female, 30.

Illegitimate : Male, 4 ; Female, 2.

Birth-rate—R.G., 16·7. Birth-rate—England and Wales, 18·3.

Deaths—total, 39 : Male, 19 ; Female, 20.

Death-rate—R.G., 11·0. Death-rate, England and Wales, 12·2.

Number of Women dying in consequence of Child-birth—1.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age per 1000 Births, 16·9 (Legitimate, 1 ; Illegitimate, 0) during the year.

Infant Death-rate for England and Wales is 75.

No Deaths occurred from Infectious Diseases usually affecting Infants and Children.

The Causes of Death were as follows :—Influenza, 2 ; Tuberculosis of Respiratory System, 3 ; Cancer, 5 ; Diabetes, 2 ; Heart Disease, 6 ; Arterio Sclerosis, 3 ; Bronchitis, 1 ; Pneumonia (all forms), 2 ; Ulcer of Duodenum, 1 ; Acute and Chronic Nephritis, 6 ; Puerperal Sepsis, 1 ; other Deaths from Violence, 1 ; other defined Diseases, 6.

Paupers requiring special Medical or Surgical Treatment are sent to Aberystwyth, Carmarthen, Swansea, or Cardiff Hospitals. The disease most prevalent during the last quinquennium were those mentioned above as due to exposure to cold and wet weather. To these may be added Cancer, the cause of which is a mystery. The fact that irritants are the cause of malignant growths on external parts of the body leads one to think that improper feeding, such as the bolting of unmasticated food especially when the teeth are decayed and defective, and certain deleterious properties of food producing slow and prolonged irritation of the alimentary canal and poisoning the system generally, may have something to do with Cancer in persons who have inherited a susceptibility to the disease.

It is gratifying to note that during 1925 the general death-rate is somewhat lower than that for England and Wales. The infant death-rate is only 16·9 as compared with 75 for England and Wales.

15 Persons had attained the age of 65 and upwards.

6	"	"	"	70	"
4	"	"	"	80	"

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

The Cardiganshire County Council contributes towards the Welsh Memorial Association. The cases of Tuberculosis occurring in the District are referred to the Tuberculosis Physician residing at Lampeter and are treated by him at the centre at Lampeter and relegated by him to one of the Sanatoria or Hospitals of the Association if necessary.

There are no Hospitals available in the area for the treatment of other Infectious Diseases, and medical or surgical cases of a non-infectious nature are sent to Aberaeron, Aberystwyth, Swansea or Cardiff. The un-married mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children are admitted to the Lampeter Institution.

Ambulance Facilities.—None provided by the Council, but cars are engaged by the Guardians when necessary to take pauper patients to hospitals.

Mothers and Infants attend the Clinics at Lampeter.

Some of the Venereal Cases are treated at Swansea.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

One part-time Medical Officer of Health also employed by the Llanybther Rural District Council, and one whole-time Sanitary Inspector also serving the Llanybyther Rural District Council. Contributions are made to their salaries under the Public Health Acts.

PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

None employed by the Council. Part of the District adjoining Lampeter is able to obtain the services of the Nurses of the Lampeter Borough, but the District in general is unprovided with Nurses for general purposes and there are no registered midwives in the District.

The Cardiganshire County Council are not willing to allow their Health Visitors to take swabs from the throats in cases of Diphtheria as they are afraid of their carrying infection, so that the lack of an Isolation Hospital in the County combined with the fact that no provision is made for nursing infectious cases makes it very difficult to carry out both preventive and curative treatment throughout the County.

CHEMICAL WORK.

Preliminary analysis of water are made by the Medical Officer of Health, and if any suspicion of contamination is discovered samples are sent to the Public Analyst at Swansea.

The Water Supply for the Llanwnen School was analysed at Swansea and found unfit for drinking purposes. Later on, during

the winter months. it was sent by the Education Authorities elsewhere to be examined and found satisfactory. I examined the water again during the summer months, and not being satisfied with the result it was again sent to Swansea and condemned as unfit for drinking purposes with the result that the Education Committee eventually agreed to the closure of the well.

The spring supplying the Village of Llanwnen situated below the churchyard has also been analysed by the Public Analyst at Swansea and found to be fit for drinking purposes. The well is situated below but some distance to the other side of the churchyard and a good layer of sand intervenes so that the well so far is protected from pollution. As the distance from the well to the school is somewhat far it is desirable to secure a supply which in all probability can be obtained from another source not far from the village which would suffice for both the School and the Villagers. It would be advisable for the County Education Committee and the Lampeter District Council to join in the undertaking.

LEGISLATION IN FORCE.

There are no Local Acts governing the administration of the District, nor any special Local Order.

Regulations relating to Dairies, Cow-sheds and Milk Shops have been adopted.

Public Notices were given of the Rural District Council (Slaughter-houses) Order, 1924, in the District.

There are no Adoption Acts in force.

Factory and Workshop Act, 1901. The provisions of the above Act are complied with. The Factories are kept clean, free from effluvia and overcrowding, and well ventilated on the whole. They are lime-washed once a year. Several are practically closed owing to a slump in trade.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

Water.—There are no works of water supply. Water for domestic purposes is chiefly obtained from springs, dip wells, dug wells usually provided with pumps and are rarely free from pollution owing to insufficient protection.

The Llangybi Village Pump is out of order, and instructions have been given to the Parish Council to execute the following works :—To thoroughly cleanse out well. To concrete the sides for a distance of four feet below the surface of the soil and carried up 15 inches above the road level. The opening of the well to be similarly concreted having a cast-iron cover and frame embedded in same for access to the well. To replace the existing wooden pump by an anti-freezing cast-iron pump fixed some little distance from the well. To provide a 6-inch stone-ware drain to carry away surface and waste water. It appears that the well is mainly

polluted by the entrance of surface water due to the County Council road-men having filled in the adjacent roadside channel.

A scheme of water supply is needed for the Villages of New Court and Drefach in the Parish of Llanwenog. A supply for the former could be procured at a comparatively small expense. The Village of Llanwnen is also deficient in its water supply. Abundance of water is to be found at Felinfach within reasonable distance to the village and school, which water could be brought thereto by means of an hydraulic ram pumping to an elevated tank.

Rivers and Streams.—No perceptible pollution. The bed of the Dulas stream which flows sluggishly through the Village of Llangybi to the River Teify at Lampeter has for the most part of its course been cleansed of weeds and other desposits which were a menace to public health,

Drainage and Sewage. There is no system of drainage and sewerage. Sewage is generally disposed in the gardens attached to the dwellings.

Closet Accommodation. Pail system mostly. Approximate number, 720.

Scavenging. There is no public scavenging done. House refuse disposed of in gardens and surplus carted away by farmers periodically.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Number of Inspections of Dwelling-houses	-	-	-	310
" " Dairies and Cowsheds	-	-	-	10
" " Workshops and Bakehouses	-	-	-	3
" " Slaughter-houses	-	-	-	10
" " Schools	-	-	-	32
" Houses disinfected after Infectious Disease	-	-	-	11
" " " death of Tubercular Disease	-	-	-	2
Notices under Public Health Acts—				
Number of Informal Notices served	-	-	-	4
" " " complied with	-	-	-	1

The nature of the nuisances or defects discovered were the keeping of animals and manure heaps too near dwellings, want of cleanliness, deficient water supply and privy accommodation.

Schools.—All the Elementary Schools were found in a good order of cleanliness. The arrangements for the disposal of the contents of the latrines at Cellan Council School have greatly improved.

The following Schools are defective in water supplies:—New Court, Llanwnen and Llangybi.

Housing.—There does not appear to be any real shortage of houses, nor any serious overcrowding in the parishes. The standard of housing throughout the district may be approximately estimated

The defects found to exist are dampness from various causes, inadequate air space at rear, insufficient lighting, no through ventilation, bad sleeping-room accommodation, the absence of impervious paving in the vicinity of the houses. Among the unfit houses are a number of small-holdings. In many cases no action is taken because it is realised that if closing orders are issued, the owners rather than repair will close the dwellings and annex the land to an adjoining farm in which case the tenant and his family will be dispossessed of the means of livelihood. The outlay in repairs cannot be justified at the existing rents. Closing orders are issued for all totally unfit houses once they become vacant.

If the Government free grant to private persons be substantially increased, say at least 25% of the total expenditure, and a guarantee given that the cost of material and labour would not exceed the prices ruling at present, the question of housing in rural areas would be solved to a great extent as there is a desire among tenants to become house-owners. Powers should be extended to Local Authorities to assist private persons in the acquisition of land for building purposes. There is need of bye-laws relating to the erection of new houses.

er of new houses erected during the year—

(a) Total	-	-	-	-	-	-
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(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts—					
(1) By the Local Authority	-	-	-	-	Nil
(2) By other bodies or persons	-	-	-	-	1

Inspection—(1) Total n

(2) Number of Dwelling-houses which were inspected

and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 - - - - - 31

(3) Number of Dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation - - - - - 5

(4) Number of Dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	13
2. Remedy of defects without service of Formal Notices.	
Number of defective Dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers - - - - -	3
Number of Preliminary Notices served - - - - -	13
3. Action under Statutory Powers—	
A. Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925 - - - - -	Nil
B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts - - - - -	Nil
C. Proceedings under Sections 11, 14 and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925—	
(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders - - - - -	5*
(2) Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made - - - - -	2†
(3) Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the Dwelling-houses having been rendered fit - - - - -	Nil
(4) Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made - - - - -	Nil
(5) Number of Dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders - - - - -	Nil

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) *Milk Supply.* There are three registered Cowkeepers. Structural improvements have been effected to the Cowsheds; but means of better light should be provided. No complaint has been received as to the wholesomeness of milk.

The Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order of 1885 has been adopted.

(b) *Meat.* No action taken as yet under the 1924 Regulations. There are two private Slaughter-houses which cannot be registered as they do not comply with the Regulations. It would be advisable to provide a public slaughter-house.

(c) *Other Foods.* Visits are made from time to time to food purveyors and bake-houses.

(d) No case of food poisoning.

* 1 and 2 Mountain, 1 and 2 Pantygravel in the Parish of Llanwenog and Pantgwyn, Silian.
† 1 and 2 Mountain vacated.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES GENERALLY.

During the years 1921 to 1925 inclusive the following cases were notified :—Erysipelas, 5; Pneumonia, 29; Diphtheria, 14; Scarlet Fever, 31; Encephalitis Lethargia, 1; Puerperal Fever, 1; Tuberculosis (Pulmonary), 35; (Non-pulmonary), 1.

The appended table shows the number notified during each of the five years.

Diphtheria has been more or less endemic in the District for the last 25 years, but the number of cases are much fewer than in the adjoining Llanybyther Rural District. Most of the cases occur in Llanwenog Parish and the children affected were mostly those attending the Llanybyther Council School. Antitoxin is supplied to general Practitioners at the expense of the Council, and since a year and half ago bacteriological examinations are made at Swansea, at the expense of the Council, of the swabs from the throats of persons suspected of Diphtheria. One death occurred during the five years from Diphtheria.

Scarlet Fever.—31 Cases occurred during the five years, and out of these 16 occurred in 1922. One death occurred during that period. I find that the epidemics usually begin after the summer holidays, and cases break out here and there until the end of March. The disease is generally much milder than it used to be, and consequently the cases are missed as often a medical man is not called in. The School Nurse and Health Visitors are not allowed to visit infectious diseases which is also a draw-back as they would be able to draw the Medical Officer of Health's attention to mild cases.

It is often difficult to isolate Infectious Diseases on account of the lack of an Isolation Hospital in the County, and the houses do not always lend themselves to the proper separation of affected cases.

Influenza.—13 Deaths occurred during the five years.

Encephalitis Lethargia.—In April, 1924, a fatal case of the above was notified as occurring at Llanwnen Parish. The case had been brought there from Mold, North Wales. I communicated with the Medical Officer of Health from that District who replied that the case had been diagnosed there by a specialist as Influenza with subsequent mental break-down.

Tuberculosis.—35 Pulmonary and one Non-Pulmonary notified during the five years. During the same period 22 cases of Pulmonary and 7 of Non-Pulmonary cases died.

When a death occurs in a house the place is visited and disinfected by the Sanitary Inspector. There has been an improvement in the notification of Tuberculosis, but a few practitioners are

still somewhat lax regarding the matter and the notification form is not always completed properly. No action, so far, has been taken under the Regulations relating to tuberculous employees in the milk trade.

After the recovery of infectious cases, whenever the rooms allow it, the Sanitary Inspector fumigates the same, and if this is not practicable the room and its contents are disinfected with Lysol or corrosive sublimate. I find it advisable even in Diphtheria cases to exclude the patients from School for six weeks or two months as both in my general practice and recently whilst examining school-children for the Carinarthenshire Education Committee in different parts of the County, I discovered considerable number of children suffering from cardiac dilation and anæmia owing to them going about too soon after Diphtheria. This arrangement also serves as a safer precaution against the spread of the infection.

The Schick and Dick tests in Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever respectively have not been hitherto employed in the District.

The District has been fairly free from the non-notifiable diseases during recent years, but when such occur amongst the School-children the Head Teacher notifies both the County School Medical Officer, and the District Medical Officer of Health. There is a working arrangement between the two Medical Officers with regard to the exclusion of children from or closure of Schools. The latter procedure is now rarely adopted.

No facilities exist in the District for cleansing and disinfection of verminous persons.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

E. CAMBRIA THOMAS, M.D.,D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health Lampeter Rural District.

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[illegible]

Infectious Diseases Notified from 1921 to 1925.

	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925
Erysipelas	2	1	1	1	...
Pneumonia	5	9	1	7	7
Diphtheria	1	2	2	6	3
Scarlet Fever	1	16	5	1	8
Encephalitis Lethargia ...	...	...	...	1	...
Puerperal Fever .....	...	...	...	...	1
Tuberculosis :					
Pulmonary { M.....	...	1	9	1	5
{ F.....	6	4	1	1	7
Non-Pulmonary { M.....	...	...	1	...	...
{ F.....	...	...	...	...	...

Tuberculosis.

Age Records.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
					Pulmonary { 2 Males } no age			
					{ 1 Female. } given			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
15	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
25	...	3	...	...	...	1	...	...
35	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	...
45	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
55	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 and upwards.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	2	6	...	...	...	2	...	...

